COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

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COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS is intended to provide quick updates on issues of interest to members and affiliates of the Council of Ontario Universities (COU). It is produced regularly throughout the academic year. This issue covers the months of November and December 2003.

New Minister meets with representatives of Council

On November 12, 2003, Executive Heads of Ontario universities welcomed the opportunity for their first group meeting with the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, Mary Anne Chambers. Although these are still early days for the new government, Executive Heads were encouraged by the Minister's awareness of key issues such as tuition offset funding and by her recognition of the need to act quickly on several fronts.

The meeting also provided Executive Heads with the opportunity to acquaint the Minister with the many implications associated with the growing numbers of students and with the need for the capacity to provide access and quality at all levels of university education.

The Minister indicated that she is looking forward to touring university and college campuses and plans to begin province-wide visits early in the New Year.

COU hosts reception for members of government caucus

On December 2, 2003, COU hosted a reception for members of the government caucus. Mary Anne Chambers, Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, and other ministers were in attendance.

A large display highlighted the need for growth in graduate enrolment and the breadth of university research projects across the province, while a number of charts and graphs focused on higher education in the context of economic competitiveness.

COU made available to guests its latest report, *Advancing Ontario's Future Through Advanced Degrees*. The report details the findings of the Task Force on Future Requirements for Graduate Education in Ontario. The Task Force, chaired by Dr. Paul Davenport, President of the University of Western Ontario, was established to develop a projection of the probable demand for graduate education in Ontario's universities to 2013-14. The report notes that, to meet the labour market demand for advanced degree graduates, the Ontario university sector must increase its graduate enrolment by 88% – virtually double its graduate capacity – within a decade.

Two additional COU publications were also made available. *A Sampling of Success: Stories of Provincial Investment in University Research* is the 2002 compilation of success stories illustrating the range and richness of university research supported by the Ontario government. The

brochure *Shared Goals & Building Blocks* suggests five goals that are likely to be shared by the people of Ontario, their government and the province's publicly funded universities for a strong university system, and identifies the building blocks and resource-related commitments that would enable Ontario universities to achieve these goals.

On hand also were copies of *Investing for Prosperity*, the Second Annual Report of the Task Force on Competitiveness, Productivity and Economic Progress, chaired by Roger L. Martin, Dean of the Joseph L. Rotman School of Management.

The three COU publications are posted on the Council's web site (www.cou.on.ca).

Conference focuses on investing in and transforming communities

On November 25, 2003, the Ontario Competitive City Regions (OCCR) Partnership and the Canadian Urban Institute hosted a conference on Investing in Learning Communities: Collaborating to Compete in the Knowledge Economy. OCCR is composed of two federal departments, Human Resources Development and Industry Canada; Ontario's Ministry of Economic Development and Trade; and Ontario universities, which are represented by COU and the Office for Partnerships for Advanced Skills (OPAS).

The one-day conference, chaired by David Johnston, President of the University of Waterloo, brought together representatives from universities and colleges, the private sector and local government. Approximately 190 attended the conference, which featured Roger L. Martin, Chair of the Task Force on Competitiveness, Productivity and Economic Progress and Dean of the Joseph L. Rotman School of Management at the University of Toronto, as the keynote speaker.

Several current and former university leaders were also featured, including Dr. John Evans, Chair of Torstar, Chair of the Toronto Research Alliance and Chair of MARS Discovery District (formerly with the University of Toronto and McMaster University); Bonnie Patterson, President of Trent University; Carol Stephenson, Dean of the Richard Ivey School of Business at the University of Western Ontario; and Dr. Mary Walshok, Associate Vice-Chancellor of Extended Studies and Public Programs at the University of California in San Diego. The conference highlighted the vital role that universities play in sustaining a region's economic viability.

Bank of Canada Governor receives OPAS Visionary Award

On November 17, 2003, Dr. David A. Dodge, Governor of the Bank of Canada, was presented with the 2003 OPAS Visionary Award. The event, which was held at Carleton University and hosted by the Eric Sprott School of Business, was broadcast live to 30 universities at 23 campuses in nine provinces across Canada.

Following an introduction by Carleton University President Richard Van Loon, Dr. Dodge presented his views on the need for greater economic globalization and the importance of the private and public sectors working in collaboration and, in the latter regard, thanked OPAS for its work in promoting partnerships between industry and universities.

Carol Stephenson, Chair of the OPAS Board of Directors and Dean of the Richard Ivey School of Business at the University of Western Ontario, presented the award to Dr. Dodge in front of an audience of students, faculty and invited business and government leaders.

Second cycle of undergraduate program review audits underway

The first year of the second seven-year cycle of undergraduate program review audits is underway with three audits scheduled: Brock University in December 2003, Redeemer University College in February 2004 and the University of Ottawa in March 2004. Two institutions, the University of Ontario Institute of Technology and the Ontario College of Art & Design, have also been added to the audit schedule.

To maintain and enhance the quality of undergraduate education, Ontario universities implement a regular process of undergraduate program review within each institution according to the guidelines issued by the Undergraduate Program Review Audit Committee (UPRAC), under the authority of the Ontario Council of Academic Vice-Presidents (OCAV). In turn, auditors appointed by OCAV conduct a thorough audit of the review process.

Normally, a team of three auditors conduct each audit. This past October, three new auditors were appointed: Dr. John ApSimon (Carleton – retired), Dr. Bernard Philogène (Ottawa) and Dr. Patricia Rowe (Waterloo – retired). After serving on 12 teams, one of the original auditors, Dr. Ross Rudolph (York), has completed his second and final term as an auditor.

At the end of the first cycle, OCAV examined the document that sets out the framework for program reviews and audits, *UPRAC Audit Guidelines*, and has subsequently refined, strengthened and reissued them as *UPRAC Review and Audit Guidelines*. The revised guidelines will be posted on COU's web site (www.cou.on.ca) under Affiliates early in the new year.

Executive Director on board for new Ontario IMG Clearinghouse

On October 27, 2003, Brad Sinclair assumed the role of Executive Director for the Ontario IMG Clearinghouse. Funded by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC), the new Clearinghouse is a joint venture of the Ministry, the Council of Ontario Faculties of Medicine and the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario. Mr. Sinclair will provide leadership, strategic direction and overall management of the Clearinghouse, which will not only have an informational mandate but also case-manage IMGs (international medical graduates) through Ontario's regulatory, screening and postgraduate system.

Mr. Sinclair brings a wealth of professional experience to the newly created position, having served as Director of the Health Sciences Office at COU, Director of the Ontario Council of Teaching Hospitals at the Ontario Hospital Association and, most recently, Director of the Academic Health Science Centres Project at MOHLTC.

Educational conference on "end of life" care

On November 6 and 7, 2003, the Associated Medical Services (AMS) and the Council of Ontario Faculties of Medicine (COFM) presented the fifth annual AMS-COFM Conference, entitled Bringing Back the Humanity, Teaching How to Care: Spotlight on Excellence in End of Life Care Education.

This year's conference, which was held in Toronto, focused on the current state of education in "end of life" care in the undergraduate, postgraduate, continuing education and faculty development settings.

2003 edition of *COU Briefing Notes* now available

COU recently published the 2003 edition of the *Council of Ontario Universities Briefing Notes*, which presents an overview of key issues in the university sector. All sections of the guide are updated and revised on an annual basis; and this year a number of new sections were added including three on key health sciences topics: medical school expansion, international medical graduates and clinical placements.

Prepared by the Research, Analysis and Policy Division, *Briefing Notes* is designed to complement existing institution-specific documents, and is normally distributed to Board Chairs, Executive Heads, Board Secretaries, as well as to several government offices. The guide will be an especially valuable resource about the university sector in light of the installation of Ontario's newly elected provincial government.

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